

LEIGH-ON-SEA

Urban District Council.

REPORT

OF THE

Health of Leigh-on-Sea

FOR THE YEAR 1897.

BY

W. DOUGLAS WATSON, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,

Medical Officer of Health for Leigh-on-Sea.

LEIGH-ON-SEA:

PRINTING SUPPLY, LEIGH BAZAAR.



Leigh-on-Sea Urban District Council

OFFICERS.

Clerk :


G. EGERTON WRIGHT-MOTION.

Medical Officer :

W. DOUGLAS WATSON, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

Surveyor & Sanitary Inspector :

EDWARD WRIGHT.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2017 with funding from
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b29976388>

REPORT.



GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of submitting to you the first Annual Report for the town of Leigh-on-Sea. The statistics of the first quarter of the year, before the Councils' formation, have been, as much as possible, included.

Population.

The population at the last Census was 2,108, estimated in the middle of 1897 it was 3,525.

Births.

The births registered in Leigh during 1897 were 87 ; 39 males, 48 females.

The birth-rate, calculated from the total number of births and the foregoing estimate of population, was 24·6 That of Greater London being 29·4.

Deaths.

During the year, 52 deaths were registered. The death-rate per 1000 for the year being 14·7 ; that of Greater London being 17·7.

The deaths last year were distributed according to age as follows :—

Under 1 year	...	...	...	...	7
From 1 to 5 years	...	...	...	...	8
„ 5 to 20 „	...	...	...	...	9
„ 20 to 40 „	...	...	...	...	7
„ 40 to 60 „	...	...	...	...	5
„ 60 to 80 „	...	...	...	...	14
„ 80 upwards	...	...	...	...	2
					<hr/>
					52
					<hr/>

The deaths of infants under 1 year to 1000 births was 80·4.

While that in London was 158 per 1000 births.

Zymotic Diseases.

The number of deaths from these diseases amounted to 15, and were as follows :—

Small Pox	...	...	...	...	—
Measles	...	...	...	...	—
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	—
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	7
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	2
Fevers	...	...	...	...	4 (enteric)
Diarrhœa	...	...	...	...	2
					<hr/>
					15
					<hr/>

TABLE OF DEATHS during the Year 1897, in the Leigh-on-Sea Urban District, classified according to Diseases, Ages, and Localities.

Mortality from all causes at sub-joined ages.										Mortality from subjoined causes, distinguishing Deaths of Children under Five years of age.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																		

Deaths occurring outside the District of persons belonging thereto ... 3

Deaths occurring within the District among persons not belonging thereto ... 3

Notification of infectious diseases is compulsory. Act adopted by Council in May '97, previously in force under Rochford Rural Council.

Isolation Hospital situated in Rochford District.

Infectious Cases.

Fifty-two cases were reported under the Infectious Diseases Notification Act.

This gives a proportion of persons infected per 1000 population of 14.7.

The same for greater London was 10.2.

The death rate from infectious disease for the year was 3.1.

In London it was 2.4.

Five cases were removed to the Isolation Hospital in Rochford, they were as follows :—

Diphtheria	...	...	...	3
Membranous Croup	...	...	...	1
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	1
				5

Two of these cases were fatal *i.e.* the case of membranous croup and one of diphtheria.

Small Pox.

No cases occurred in Leigh last year.

Measles.

No fatality.

Scarlet Fever.

Seven cases notified ; no death.

Diphtheria.

Twenty-five cases were notified, seven of which proved fatal.

It will be noticed that all these cases occurred in the latter half of the year.

Whooping Cough.

Two cases of this disease proved fatal.

Fever.

Seventeen cases of enteric or typhoid fever were notified, with four deaths.

All of these cases also were in the latter half of the year.

There were no cases of typhoid, continued relapsing, or paerperal fever.

Diarrhœa.

Two deaths occurred from diarrhœa.

Phthisis.

Four deaths from phthisis or consumption were registered.

It is becoming more and more evident that consumption is a contagious disease which is fostered by dirt, want of ventilation, and insanitary surroundings.

These facts more widely known would tend to the prevention of the disease.

Sanitary Proceedings.

Upon the appointment of a Sanitary Inspector systematic visitation was begun. Special visits were also made as below by the Inspector in conjunction with me when considered advisable,

The schools were closed for three weeks in the autumn on account of the prevalence of diphtheria.

Number of dwelling houses visited	...	...	135
Complaints of nuisances received	...	...	45
Drains examined and tested	...	...	41
Notices served to abate nuisances...	...	...	24

All but three of which nuisances have been satisfactorily attended to.

Notices to alter drains, closets, etc.	...	...	15
Notices to remove offensive accumulations	...	...	4
Notices to remove insanitary dustbins and replace with metal ones	...	...	40
House drains ventilated	...	...	30
Houses disinfected	...	...	25
Drains repaired	...	...	12

These proceedings date from the middle of May when your Council first appointed their Sanitary Officer.

The methods of disposal of sewage, the condition of the drains, cesspools, and the water supply, were found to be very insanitary. Blocked, perforated, and ill-laid drains, overflowing cesspools, and choked privies were found, from which the surrounding ground had undoubtedly been soaked with sewage for a long time, contaminating the water and so forming a condition of things favourable to the spread of disease. To this, the number of cases of diphtheria and enteric fever above noted must be attributed. There is no doubt that these diseases have been *endemic*, *i.e.* the infection being always present and occasionally breaking out.

So far, it has been impossible to deal with this state of things in a thoroughly satisfactory way. The important step of obtaining a really good general water supply has been accomplished, and measures are being taken for the provision of a general system of drainage. Dr. Thresh, the County Medical Officer, visited Leigh in December last, and advised as to drainage.

Following on his advice your Council have decided to obtain the services of a Sanitary Engineer, Mr. Bailey-Denton, to report and propose schemes of the same. At present the most efficient and economical plan would seem to be that of filtration tanks.

The Water Supply.

The new Water Works were begun under the auspices of the Rural Council.

Water was found at a depth of 640 feet, the depth of the well itself being 290 feet.

The analysis of the water showed it to be of excellent quality.

The supply is estimated at 8,000 gallons per hour.

The capacity of the reservoir is 50,000 gallons.

The pumping is done by two oil engines of 25-h.p.

The site of the Water Works occupies about quarter of an acre.

Isolation Hospital,

The existing Hospital at Rochford being very unsatisfactory, a joint committee was appointed from the districts of Rochford, Shoeburyness, and Leigh to consider the question of building a new hospital, on a site already purchased by the combined districts, and to draft a scheme for the erection and use of the same. This has been laid before your Council.

In conclusion, gentlemen, I think we can fairly look upon the past year as one of improvement on the whole from which we will reap benefit in the future.

W. DOUGLAS WATSON.

March 8th, 1898.